United Nations E/CN.6/2016/19

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
23 March 2016

Original: English

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Sixtieth session**
14-24 March 2016
Agenda item 3 (a) (i)
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: priority theme: women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development**

# Key strategies for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## Chair's summary

1. On 16 March 2016, the Commission on the Status of Women held a panel discussion on the priority theme of the sixtieth session of the Commission "Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development", on the topic of key strategies for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Vice-Chair of the Commission, Šejla Đurbuzović, moderated the discussion. The panellists were: the Director for Social Development of the National Planning Department, Alejandra Corchuelo (Colombia); the Andrew Glyn Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, James Heintz (United States of America); Government Statistician and Chief Executive of the Statistical Service, Philomena Efua Nyarko (Ghana); a senior adviser at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Anita Nayar (India); and the Principal Gender Adviser at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Sally Moyle (Australia).

2. Participants identified key strategies for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The discussion highlighted examples of good practices, lessons learned and opportunities for the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the context of the 2030 Agenda. Representatives from 11 Member States and from three civil society organizations made interventions and posed questions to the panellists.

3. Speakers noted that implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Beijing Platform for Action needed to be aligned in order for

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coherent and accelerated change to be achieved in the lives of women and girls. It was urgent to recognize the multiple and intersecting inequalities faced by women and the need to achieve substantive equality, including equality of outcomes and the equal enjoyment of human rights. Participants noted that gender perspectives must be integrated in the implementation of the entire 2030 Agenda, the universality of which they also highlighted.

**Gender-responsive national institutional arrangements and policy frameworks**

4. Governments would need strong national gender equality machineries and institutional arrangements to ensure gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Participants emphasized that multi-stakeholder engagement was critical for effective, inclusive and accountable policies. Participants recognized that strong gender equality ministries could convene other ministries, including those responsible for planning and finance, and promote partnerships. They encouraged the establishment of inter-agency mechanisms and the appointment of gender focal points for a coordinated institutional approach to the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

5. Participants identified several challenges to attaining such conducive conditions, including funding constraints, a lack of sufficient policy analysis and evaluation and the limited exchange of good practices at the global level.

**Financing gender equality and macroeconomic policy frameworks**

6. Participants emphasized that political will and financial resources were critical for a gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such investment, together with macroeconomic policies would enable that approach to implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Participants discussed the significance of domestic resource mobilization, official development assistance and private sector support. Domestic resource mobilization could include progressive taxation, the more efficient collection of taxes, including new taxes on undertaxed financial sector transactions and natural resource exports, the analysis of budgets for gender-specific impacts and the reprioritization of expenditures towards realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

7. Women's labour force participation was essential for economic growth and shared prosperity and should be supported by the broader provision of childcare and social protection. Women were overrepresented in low-paid, informal, unprotected, precarious and unpaid labour, which presented barriers to their empowerment.

8. Participants stressed that economic sustainability was intrinsically linked with recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work, which disproportionately burdened women and girls. Unpaid care work was not included in national measurements, such as gross domestic product, although it contributed a significant amount to GDP, and was usually not considered in economic policy.

9. Examples of measures to reduce the gender pay gap included oversight mechanisms, reward systems, collective bargaining processes, individual complaints and reporting to human rights bodies. One strategy required employers with over 100 employees to report on pay equity.

10. Participants recognized the importance of women's rights groups and trade unions in supporting women's access to decent work and social protection, including such aspects as childcare, health care, the minimum wage and pensions. Participants acknowledged that women's right to organize had to be protected.

**Sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics: follow-up and review**

11. Participants expressed their commitment to enhancing the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data, gender statistics and gender-responsive indicators. At the same time, participants acknowledged that the follow-up and review of the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presented challenges from a data perspective.

12. Participants observed that statistical institutions and systems had to be modernized and technical capacities improved so as to better inform national, regional and global decision-making and action. This would require substantial financial commitments and resource mobilization.

13. Each country would need to adapt and use, as relevant to the national context, data collection and statistical methods, such as surveys, interviews or big data. Similarly, each country would need to build a national framework or system to undertake follow-up and review processes. Participants highlighted the complementary nature of qualitative and quantitative data; the former often revealed theretofore hidden facets of the experiences, needs and interests of women and girls.

**Gender equality and environmental sustainability**

14. The integration of environmental, social and economic sustainability was necessary to "leave no one behind". In addition to gender-responsive implementation of the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the example of the three Sustainable Development Goals related to food security, sustainable energy and climate change was highlighted and ongoing strategies to implement those goals from a gender equality perspective were presented. There was a call for the establishment of implementation mechanisms that would advance feminist policies while holding public and private finance institutions accountable, including in the areas of climate finance and financing for development.

15. Some participants drew attention to global structural obstacles, such as financial, trade and investment rules, to achieving the goals outlined above. One strategy proposed to address such obstacles was building regional solidarity across ministries and across social movements. It was critical for women's movements to seek and build alliances with progressive and feminist policymakers so as to address the structural obstacles that created and maintained gender and other inequalities. Some speakers identified that feminist policies needed to be grounded in regional realities in order for progress to be made towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, while pursuing environmental and economic sustainability. Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in tandem with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development required national and regional development institutions to rebuild regional solidarity for gender, environmental and economic justice.